

REMARKS

Claims 1-31 are presently pending. Claims 1, 6, 9, 11, 17, and 30 have been amended. Therefore, claims 1-31 remain pending in the present application.

Specification Objection

The specification was objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for “a casino floor,” “a casino,” and “geographic region,” as stated in claims 2 and 24.

In view of the amendments made to the specification, the Applicants request that the objection to the specification be withdrawn. The Applicants note that no new matter has been added.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

Claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regard as their invention. In view of the amendments made to claim 6, the Applicants respectfully request that the § 112, second paragraph, rejection of claim 6 be withdrawn.

Claim 30 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, because the term “substantially” was found to be a relative term that renders the claim indefinite. In view of the amendments made to claim 30 removing the term “substantially,” the Applicants respectfully request that the § 112, second paragraph, rejection of claim 30 be withdrawn.

Claim Objections – 35 U.S.C. § 112, Fourth Paragraph

Claim 6 was objected to under 35 U.S.C. § 112, fourth paragraph, as being in improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. In view of the amendments made to claim 6, the Applicants respectfully request that the § 112, fourth paragraph, rejection of claim 6 be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 2, 4-5, 8-12, 16-19, 21-25, and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0130033 to Loose (“Loose”).

Independent Claim 1

According to the law of anticipation, “[f]or a prior art reference to anticipate in terms of 35 U.S.C. § 102, every element of the claimed invention must be identically shown in a single reference.” *Diversitech Corp. v. Century Steps, Inc.*, 7 U.S.P.Q.2d 1315, 1317 (Fed. Cir. 1988) (emphasis added). “The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the . . . claim”. *Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co.*, 868 F.2d 1226, 1236 (Fed. Cir. 1989).

Independent claim 1 is directed to “[a] method for delivering a bonus event to a gaming machine selected from a plurality of gaming machines”. Claim 1 recites “communicating with said first gaming machine to initiate display of a visual bonus indicator on a first display of said first gaming machine” and “communicating with said second gaming machine to initiate display of said visual bonus indicator on a second display of said second gaming machine”. Claim 1 further recites “animating in a bonus animation said visual bonus indicator on said second gaming machine display of said second gaming machine” and “awarding a bonus award to a player of said second gaming machine in response to said bonus animation being animated on said second gaming machine display.”

Loose is not directed to a “method for delivering a bonus event to a gaming machine selected from a plurality of gaming machines”. Rather, Loose discloses methods for “attracting players to gaming machines.¹” Loose, *inter alia*, p. 1, para. 3, p. 2, para. 0013. The gaming machines of Loose include a display, an emitter, and a sensor. *Id.*, *inter alia*, p. 1, para. 0004. The sensor detects a first signal from an adjacent machine. *Id.* In response to the first signal, the machine may generate indicia and emit a second signal from the emitter. *Id.* The second signal may be detected by yet another adjacent gaming machine, which, in turn, generates the indicia, and so on. *Id.*

Nowhere in Loose is “animating in a bonus animation said visual bonus indicator” disclosed, let alone “awarding a bonus award . . . in response to said bonus animation being animated on said second gaming machine display.” The only disclosure of Loose relating to a bonus mode describes a flashing lamp pattern that moves toward a machine in a bonus mode. Loose, p. 2, para. 0019. The purpose of the flashing lamps in that embodiment of Loose is so that “the machine in the bonus mode becomes the focus of attention.” *Id.* The flashing lamps of Loose, therefore, have nothing to do with the outcome of the bonus game. Thus, Loose does not disclose the element of “awarding a

bonus award . . . in response to said bonus animation being animated on said second gaming machine display”, as required by claim 1.

Thus, for at least these reasons, the Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1 is allowable over Loose because Loose does not disclose every element of the claim. The Applicants further submit that claims 2-10, which depend from claim 1, are allowable for at least the same reasons.

Dependent Claim 9

Claim 9 requires that the acts of claim 1 are completed in the listed sequence. The Applicants respectfully submit that Loose does not disclose such a sequence of acts.

According to claim 9, prior to communicating with a first gaming machine to initiate display of a visual bonus indicator, a wager must be accepted at first and second gaming machines. Requiring that the display indicia (e.g., flashing lamps) of the gaming machines of Loose only be activated after a first and second gaming machine accepts a player’s wager would render Loose unsatisfactory for its intended purpose – attracting players to the gaming machine. Once the gaming machines of Loose accept a wager from a player, the attraction feature is no longer necessary.

Thus, for at least these reasons, as well as for the reasons provided above with respect to claim 1, from which claim 9 depends, the Applicants respectfully submit that claim 9 is allowable over Loose.

Independent Claim 11

Independent claim 11 is directed to “[a] method of awarding bonus awards on two or more gaming machines”. Claim 11 recites, “displaying on a first display of said first gaming machine a visual bonus indicator” and “in response to said displaying of said visual bonus indicator on said first display of said first gaming machine, awarding a first bonus award to a player of said first gaming machine”. Claim 1 further recites “displaying on said second display of said second gaming machine said visual bonus indicator” and “in response to said displaying of said visual bonus indicator on said second display of said second gaming machine, awarding a second bonus award to a player of said second gaming machine.”

As described above with respect to claim 1, Loose does not disclose awarding bonus awards “in response to said displaying of said visual bonus indicator on said first display of said first

gaming machine” or “in response to said displaying of said visual bonus indicator on said second display of said second gaming machine.”

Thus, the Applicants respectfully submit that claim 11 and its dependent claims 12-20 are allowable for at least these reasons.

Dependent Claim 17

The Applicants respectfully submit that claim 17 is allowable for at least the same reasons as set forth above with respect to claims 9 and 11. Thus, the Applicants respectfully submit that claim 17 is allowable over Loose.

Independent Claim 21

Claim 21 is directed toward a “system for providing random bonus awards.” Claim 21 recites, “a visual bonus indicator controller adapted to coordinate display of a visual bonus indicator on certain ones of said displays of said gaming machines, said visual bonus indicator indicating to a player an increased likelihood of a bonus award being awarded on a gaming machine upon which it is displayed”. Claim 21 further recites, “a processor operative to award a bonus award in connection with certain animations of said visual bonus indicator.”

Loose does not disclose “a visual bonus indicator indicating to a player an increased likelihood of a bonus award.” Rather, as explained above with respect to claim 1, the lamps of Loose are used to attract players to a gaming machine or to attract attention to a gaming machine entering a bonus mode. Loose, p. 2, para. 0019. The lamps merely indicate that a bonus game is to be played on that gaming machine, not the likelihood that a bonus award will actually be awarded on that gaming machine.

Furthermore, the bonus awards of Loose are not awarded “in connection with certain animations of said visual bonus indicator,” as required by claim 21. Loose does not disclose “animations of said visual bonus indicator”, let alone “award[ing] a bonus award in connection with” such animations. Rather, as explained above, the lamps of Loose have nothing to do with the outcome of a bonus game. Therefore, this element of claim 21 is also not disclosed in Loose.

Thus, the Applicants respectfully submit that claim 21 and its dependent claims 22-31 are allowable for at least these reasons.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Applicants respectfully submit that dependent claims 3, 7, 13-15, 20, 26-28, and 31, which depend either directly or indirectly on independent claim 1, 11, or 21, are also not anticipated by or rendered obvious over Loose, U.S. Patent No. 6,648,757 to Slomiany et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,876,284 to Acres et al., U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0186739 to Paulsen et al., or any combination thereof for at least the same reasons discussed above in connection with independent claims 1, 11, and 21.

Thus, dependent claims 3, 7, 13-15, 20, 26-28, and 31 also should be in a condition for allowance.

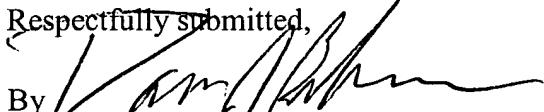
Conclusion

The Applicant submits that the claims are in a condition for allowance and action toward that end is earnestly solicited. It is believed that no other fees are due. However, should any additional fees be required (except for payment of the issue fee), the Commissioner is authorized to deduct the fees from Jenkens & Gilchrist Deposit Account No. 10-0447 (47079-00237USPT).

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Respectfully submitted,

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